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ABSTRACT

This paper describes online newsmedia databases which have been intentionally designed to respond to needs for information that is more current than the information in printed indexes or online versions of these indexes. It is suggested that these databases are useful to libraries because, in addition to subject indexing, they have "word access," e.g., to names of people, products, companies, or geographical regions. By using word access, librarians can more efficiently track down such elusive elements as a quote from a speech that may never be indexed in a bibliographic database. Databases that provide up-to-date information include: (1) databases designed to provide current records for an older file; (2) full-text databases; (3) wire-service databases which make full-text information available immediately or shortly after being transmitted to newspapers; (4) databases that quickly index current sources; (5) summaries of news stories; and (6) press-release databases. Five such databases are used as exemplars: Newsearch, AP News, Washington PressText, Washington Post Electronic Edition, and USAToday Decisionline. The discussion of each database focuses on variations in the database structure, subject access, and search strategies, with emphasis on the DIALOG versions of these files. It is noted that other strategies are generally applicable. Examples of records from each of the databases are included. (SD)

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ACCESS TO CURRENT INFORMATION ONLINE

[Paper presented as part of a panel session on Updating Reference Information at the annual meeting of the Maryland Library Association, Public Services Division, May 12, 1989, Hunt Valley, Maryland]

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Abstract: ACCESS TO CURRENT INFORMATION ONLINE

This paper describes the kinds of databases used for maintaining the currency of reference sources through online databases. It presents five databases as exemplars: Newsearch, AP News, Washington PressText, the Washington Post Electronic Edition, and USAToday Decisionline. The discussion emphasizes variations in database structure, subject access, and search strategies, emphasizing the Dialog versions of these files, although some strategies are generally applicable. The paper was presented originally as part of a panel session on Updating Reference Information at the annual meeting of the Maryland Library Association, Public Services Division, May 12, 1989, Hunt Valley, Maryland.

ACCESS TO CURRENT INFORMATION ONLINE

INTRODUCTION

First, let me dispel a notion some of you may still harbor. The online version of a hardcopy database is not inherently more up-to-date than the printed version. Often the same computer tape serves as the basis for printing the hardcopy and for providing online access. It is sent to an online vendor at approximately the same time it is sent to a publisher. Processing at the vendor takes almost as much time as printing and distributing in hard copy. So, the online database is rarely more up-to-date than its print counterpart.

KINDS OF DATABASES ONLINE EMPHASIZING CURRENT INFORMATION

Now, let me appear to contradict myself and say that, depending on the subject, online information can still be more current than in-print sources, because we can access a variety of databases.¹ Some have been designed intentionally to respond to needs for more current information than in hardcopy or in online versions of hardcopy databases. In addition, because they have word access, often to the full text of a document, a librarian can often track down more efficiently elusive elements, such as a quote from a speech, which may never be indexed in bibliographic databases.

¹Lucinda D. Conger. "Searching Current Events, Part 1," *Database*, 9 (February, 1986), 28-32; Lucinda D. Conger. "Searching Current Events, Part 2," *Database*, 9 (April, 1986), 32-42.

Figure 1.

WHAT KINDS OF DATABASES PROVIDE UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION?

.....

Databases designed to
provide current
records for an
older file
[Newsearch]

Full-text newspaper
databases:
[Washington Post,
Annapolis Capital,
Commerce Business Daily]

Wire-service databases:
full-text available
immediately or shortly
after transmitted to
newspapers, radio/TV
[AP News, UPI News,
Dow Jones]

Databases which quickly
index current sources:
[NewsNet, PTS F & S Index]

Summaries of news stories:
[USA Today Decisionline]

Press-release databases:
[Washington PressText,
PR Newswire]

These databases provide current information because:

- 1) they are intentionally designed to update a file of older material
- 2) they are used for production of current sources
- 3) they index quickly sources that are themselves current
- 4) they are an online version of a very current source, not an index to the source, but the text itself
- 5) they summarize a very current source

To maintain the currency that is their strength, these databases often curtail what is a major cause of the time lag in

bibliographic databases -- abstracting and indexing. Abstracts are useful even in a full-text database because limiting a natural language search only to abstracts makes the search more precise. Abstracts, if they exist in such databases, are usually one-liners. Indexing is usually done with relatively few terms, from a limited subset of terms. The online version of the Congressional Record, which must be available to Congress the next day, uses only broad subject descriptors. But the databases supplement subject indexing with coding that allows access to names of people, products, companies, geographical regions. These are easy to identify in the documents included in the file and are often search access terms highly prized by database users. In addition, the databases also often draw on the structure of the documents included in the database to increase subject access.

Based on Williams' online directory of databases, 513 databases available through commercial services are updated on a daily, weekly or bi-weekly basis.¹ Let's look at a few of these to show how they vary and discuss some tactics to use in searching them. In talking about them, I am going to emphasize subject access, not author, and I will mention strategies on Dialog. Some of these files are available on several systems,

¹This figure is based on a search for databases updated daily, biweekly, or weekly in Dialog File 230, **Database of Databases**, prepared by Martha E. Williams. (Urbana, Illinois: U. of Illinois, Information Retrieval Research Lab., Coordinated Science Lab.) on May 6, 1989.

and often my comments are equally pertinent for other vendors as well.

NEWSEARCH

Newsearch is a Dialog file that updates on a daily basis six other files, including National Newspaper Index (which indexes the NY Times, Christian Science Monitor, the Los Angeles Times, and the Washington Post), and Magazine Index.¹ Here is an example of a record from this file:

Figure 2. EXAMPLE OF NEWSEARCH RECORD

File 211:NEWSEARCH WK=18
(COPR.1989 IAC)
.....

07479337 DIALOG File 211: NEWSEARCH
Glendening budget seeks 100 officers; most new spending
would go to schools. (Prince George County, Maryland, budget
proposed by Parris Glendening)
Hill, Retha
Washington Post v112 col 1 pA1 March 31, 1989
SOURCE FILE: NNI File 111
EDITION: Fri 21 col in
illustration table
GEOGRAPHIC CODE: NNUSLMD
GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION: Maryland
CAPTIONS: Highlights of proposed 1990 budget.
NAMED PEOPLE: Glendening, Parris--economic policy
DESCRIPTORS: Prince George's County, Maryland--economic policy;
County budgets--planning ; Finances of schools

Notice several things:

- no abstract [updates to Files 75 and 275 have abstracts]

¹Newsearch. Belmont, California: Information Access
Company. (Dialog File 211)

- augmented title, if necessary, with natural language phrases
- geographic codes and geographic locations
- captions of pictures in the document
- people and companies named in the document
- if an industry were mentioned, the entry would have SIC codes, which succinctly identify industries
- descriptors [based on LC subject headings, modified by publisher]

This is a good example to point out some search problems. Note the person's name appears one way in the title, another way in the phrase added to the title, another in the named people field. Generally, in doing name searches in all of the files I mention, for recall, it is best to put in the name in natural language with (N) as the proximity connector. This keeps the proximity close, but allows the word order to vary. Also, the searcher should allow for variant forms of a name, such as last, first and middle initial or just last and first.¹ Examples are:

SS GLENDENING(N)PARRIS

SS TRUMAN(1N)HARRY

Another problem here is that the descriptors are hyphenated. Dialog treats these as separate phrases in the descriptor field, never as a combination unless the searcher specifies he wants the combination. To do that, he must use the link connector.

SS COUNTY BUDGETS(L)PLANNING

¹David M. Pilachowski and David Everett. "What's in a Name? Looking for People Online -- Current Events --," Database, 9 (April, 1986), 43-50.

Another descriptor has even another problem. "Of" is a stop word. The system will always interpret the "of" this way unless the searcher flags it to say that it is part of the descriptor. To do that, he must put single or double quotes either around the word itself or around the phrase that contains the "of."

SS FINANCES 'OF' SCHOOLS

SS "FINANCES OF SCHOOLS"

AP NEWS

This is the beginning of a record from AP News.¹ AP News, like UPI News, is a wire service file. It contains the text of articles sent to newspapers and radio and TV stations, but with a two-day time lag before it can be accessed online in Dialog. Newswire ASAP, is a full-text database which covers the PR Newswire, Japan Economic Newswire, and Reuters Financial Report. Wire service files are also available through ALANET, Compuserve, and The Source. ALANET's version of AP News is available immediately, not two days later.

Notice several things in Figure 3:

- the article really doesn't have a title as we know it. The article's headline is evidently added by the individual newspapers.

Instead it has:

- a section tag, indicating what the scope of the news is
- a story tag, which is a brief descriptor

¹AP News. September, 1983- . New York: Associated Press, 1983- . (Dialog File 258, 259)

Figure 3. EXAMPLE OF AP NEWS UNIT RECORD

File 258:AP NEWS -11/88 - 05/03/89
(COPR. 1989 ASSOCIATED PRESS)
.....

0518096

SECTION: General news
STORY TAG: Fusion
BY: RECER, PAUL ; AP Science Writer
DATELINE: BALTIMORE (AP) May 01, 1989
TIME: 2357PDT CYCLE: PM
PRIORITY: Regular WORD COUNT: 0856

Utah scientists who captured worldwide attention with their claim to have achieved cold nuclear fusion were probably fooled by faulty calculations, researchers from two of the nation's most prominent science institutes say.

Researchers from both the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the California Institute of Technology are challenging the cold fusion claim made at the University of Utah.

Nathan Lewis said Monday that he and other Caltech researchers conducted the most precise effort yet to duplicate the Utah experiment and found that no fusion took place. He said the Utah scientists calculated a gain in heat, but that precise measurements at Caltech showed no such gain.

Papers prepared by MIT researchers for presentation today at the American Physical Society meeting also reported that verification experiments conducted over a five-week period failed to detect any fusion reaction.

Richard Petrasso of MIT's Plasma Fusion Center said the amount of neutrons, another fusion byproduct, emitted by the Utah experiment was probably much lower than the Utah scientists thought. He said the claimed flow was "inconsistent" with other data reported from the Utah experiment.

"We're asserting that their neutron emission was below what they thought it was, including the possibility that it could have been none at all," Ronald R. Parker, director of MIT's Plasma Fusion Center, said in a telephone interview Monday.

The international physics community has spent millions of dollars over the last quarter century attempting to achieve fusion using massive machines filled with plasma heated to temperatures of up to 100 million degrees.

University of Utah chemist B. Stanley Pons and his collaborator, Martin Fleischmann of England's University of Southampton, sent shock waves through the scientific world March 23 when they said they had achieved nuclear fusion using a simple electrochemical cell at room temperature.

Pons and Fleischmann said the cell used an electrode of palladium and one of platinum that were immersed in a flask of deuterium oxide, or heavy water. The researchers claimed that when an electrical current was applied to the electrodes,

deuterium nuclei were jammed into the crystal lattice of the palladium until the nuclei fused.

When the fusion occurred, Pons and Fleischmann said, the device produced four times more heat than was required to operate the experiment. They later said the ratio of heat produced to heat expended could be up to 8-1.

But Lewis said Caltech researchers found a number of problems with the Utah apparatus.

"These problems may lead to errors large enough to cast serious doubts on published determinations of excess heat," said Lewis. "When these errors are avoided, we obtain no evidence for excess heat production."

However, James Brophy, University of Utah vice president of research, said, "The criticisms aren't really different than any we've heard from the beginning." Valid objections are welcome, he said, but, "If it's out of pique, then I don't think it's helpful."

Brophy said the negative results should be judged alongside positive results from such institutions as Stanford, Texas A&M and Case Western Reserve.

Brophy said Pons and Fleischmann "are very good experimenters. I can't believe they could carry out ... measurements, as they have done, improperly."

Pons and Fleischmann, Lewis said, have admitted that their report of a 4-1 energy return was based on mathematical calculations and not on actual measurements. He said the Utah researchers evidently used incorrect assumptions to make their calculations.

He said errors were easily made, for instance, if the heavy water was not stirred to distribute heat evenly from the electrical current. When the measurements were made correctly, said Lewis, it was obvious that the total heat from the reaction was less than the energy used to operate the experiment. Parker, meanwhile, said MIT researchers have been working for weeks to verify the Utah experiments, but the results didn't hold up when measured against a standard known as a Neutron Capture Gamma Spectrum.

"If (fusion) occurred at all, it was far below what they deduced from their measurements," Parker said.

Part of the problem, Parker said, could be that Pons and Fleischmann did not directly measure the neutrons released in their experiment.

"The measurement they made was an indirect measurement, not of neutrons directly, but of gamma rays produced by neutrons," Parker said.

The two MIT researchers said in a paper planned for presentation to the conference that the Utah research apparently misinterpreted some crucial data on neutrons.

Lewis said the Caltech experiments used detection equipment 100,000 times more sensitive than devices used in the Utah experiment. He said Caltech used instruments to detect and measure any product of fusion, including neutrons or gamma rays,

tritium or helium, and any rise in heat. All such measurements, when performed correctly, were negative, Lewis said.

"We have no reason to invoke fusion to explain any of their results," he said. "At this point, we can find no evidence of anything except conventional chemistry."

- the dateline and time it was filed
- the full text of the article
- the word count also tells how long the article is

For regular news stories, journalists are trained to put the basic facts in their first paragraph: the who, what, where, why, when, and how. From an information retrieval perspective, the first paragraph then is a brief abstract. Dialog recognizes this and searches it when /TI is used as a term limiter. A cost-effective method of searching this file is to search with natural language in this field, scan the records in Format 2 to identify the most relevant article, as well as perhaps the most current or the shortest or longest, and then print out the full record. Of course, if the subject never appears in this field, the search can always broaden the search to the full-text.

WASHINGTON PRESSTEXT

Figure 4 shows another record, this time from Washington PressText.¹ This database is a collection of the press releases, policy statements, and background information from the Office of the President and the Department of State. It updates the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents and the Department of State Bulletin. The Weekly Compilation is a very current printed source, but the Department of State Bulletin, which focuses on

¹Washington PressText. 1981-. Washington: PressText News Service, 1981-. (Dialog File 145)

Figure 4. EDITED EXAMPLE OF WASHINGTON PRESSTEXT UNIT RECORD**

File 145:WASHINGTON PRESSTEXT(SM) 05/08/89
 (COPR. 1989 PRESTEXT(SM) NEWS SVC)

02054084

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY OF CANADA UPON DEPARTURE, AND PRESS CONFERENCE, MAY 4, 1989, THE DIPLOMATIC ENTRANCE.

AUTHOR/SPEAKER: BUSH, GEORGE; MULRONEY, BRIAN
 THE WHITE HOUSE, OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY
 PUBLICATION DATE: 890504
 WHITE HOUSE PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

1:55 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: May I just, at the outset of this scrum in which we each answer questions, say what a joy it's been to have Prime Minister Mulroney back here, with his very special Mila. Barbara and I froze them to death on the balconey [sic] -- it's warm now, but 20 minutes ago, it was cold -- temperature; warm in terms of the feeling that existed at that little lunch and, indeed, over in the Oval Office.

And I cite that because the relationship between the United States and Canada remains strong; our respect for the Prime Minister and his objectives remains strong. The fact that he fought hard for this breakthrough Free Trade Agreement has the respect for him at an altogether high level.

And so I can report that the conversations that we had touched on a wide array of subjects -- on the environment, and on the importance of the NATO meeting, and on the bilateral relations; good. And we found that we can look each other in the eye and talk out any differences with no rancor.

And we salute him and welcome him as a good friend.

And now, Mr. Prime Minister, the stand-up mike is all yours.

PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY: Thank you, Mr. President.

We had a very delightful and effective meeting, I thought, with President Bush and his colleagues. And Mila and I had an especially delightful lunch with Barbara and the President.

Our discussions today on the agenda dealt with the environment, which is very important, and I applaud the leadership the President is giving to the environment, particularly of the question of *acid* *rain*.

...

Q -- about *acid* *rain* once again, sir?

Q Senator Mitchell mentioned this morning that Canada should be pushing for a bilateral accord on *acid* *rain* consecutively, while the administration introduces its legislation on *acid* *rain*. Was there any talk about that and will you be pushing for that?

PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY: Well, I think the President knows my position full-well. We know that there have to be legislative changes here in the United States to kind of equate the initiatives taken in Canada. And once that is done, or while -- in the process of that being done, then there has to be an accord -- an international accord that is an enforceable document by which we can measure our progress and enforce delinquency in that event.

And so, President Bush is known as a strong environmentalist. He's made some very significant statements in regard to not only *acid* *rain*, but its impact on our bilateral relationship and his resolve to clean it up. So I'm very encouraged.

Q President Bush, can we ask you, sir, about *acid* *rain*? Did you make any undertakings in your lunch in terms of what's going to be in your clean air legislation that's going to help this *acid* *rain* problem?

THE PRESIDENT: We didn't go into the specifics -- specific amounts. As the Prime Minister said, he knows of my commitment. He knows now that we are in the final stages of formulating our recommendations to the Congress -- the Clean Air Act. And, indeed, we'll be prepared, after those recommendations go forward, to discuss in more detail the subject that you're asking about. So we did have a chance to do what you asked about. And, look, if there's anything that the Prime Minister of Canada has been clear with me about -- and he's been clear with me on everything -- it is this subject. So I don't think there's any -- he forcefully brings it up and I tell him where we stand.

...

Thank you.
END 2:20 P.M. EDT

** ... indicates deletions from record for purposes of display.

U. S.'s relations with other countries, has about a 3-month time lag in covering events or happenings. This database includes speeches, news conferences, announcements, nominations, executive orders, daily calendars, fact sheets on specific items, and testimony or statements sent to Congress. It is supposed to have releases available the day after release. Most of the 13 items in Monday's update were from Friday, but a few were from Thursday.

Note several things in this record:

- the title is often simply the format and the context of the statement, such as who made it, when, and on what occasion.
- the speaker is again viewed as the author
- there are no subject descriptors
- word/line count

Since the title gives very little subject content and the item is not indexed, it is necessary to search the full-text for any subject access. Since the length can vary significantly, and the possibility of noise increases with the amount of words searched, a good searcher should use several standard full-text searching techniques to search cost-effectively. First, he should turn on Dialog's Highlight feature, so that search terms are highlighted in the text.¹ This makes it easy to determine the reason for the hits. [Note: In the figures, asterisks on either side of a word indicate a highlighted term, e.g. *acid*.] Figure 5 shows the

¹"Highlight Joins Kwic in Full-Text Files," Dialog Chronolog, 14 (December, 1986), 266.

Figure 5. EXAMPLE OF WASHINGTON PRESSTEXT UNIT RECORD:
OUTPUT OF KWIC FORMAT WITH HIGHLIGHTED TERMS

File 145:WASHINGTON PRESSTEXT(SM) 05/08/89
(COPR. 1989 PRESTEXT(SM) NEWS SVC)
.....

69/5,K/1

02054084 FOR FULL RECORD USE FORMAT 9

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY OF
CANADA UPON DEPARTURE, AND PRESS CONFERENCE, MAY 4, 1989, THE
DIPLOMATIC ENTRANCE.

AUTHOR/SPEAKER: BUSH, GEORGE; MULRONEY, BRIAN
THE WHITE HOUSE, OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY

PUBLICATION DATE: 890504

WHITE HOUSE PRESS RELEASE

APPROX. LINES: 328 APPROX. WORDS: 4,144

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY OF
CANADA UPON DEPARTURE, AND PRESS CONFERENCE, MAY 4, 1989, THE
DIPLOMATIC ENTRANCE.

AUTHOR/SPEAKER: BUSH, GEORGE ...

... we each answer questions, say what a joy it's been to
have Prime Minister Mulroney back here, with his very special
Mila. Barbara and I froze them to death on...friend. And now,
Mr. Prime Minister, the stand-up mike is all yours.

PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY : Thank you, Mr. President. We
had a very delightful and effective meeting, I thought, with...as
we did in a very constructive way with the Prime Minister.

Q Prime Minister Mulroney , what did you say to the President
about the SNF issue?

PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY : What I said to the President was
that NATO was founded on, in my judgment... reductions, sir? Did
you urge the President to begin negotiations on SNF reductions?

PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY : I'm sorry?

Q Did you urge the President to begin negotiations -- to at
least back negotiations on SNF reductions?

PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY : I just said what the position of
Canada is in regard to -- there's one...not an association where
everybody free-lances.

Q -- different views on this, though.

PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY : We have a common NATO position, and
while there are divergence of views that emerge...We've listened
very carefully in a very -- to the constructive suggestions that
Prime Minister Mulroney has raised, and that's really all I care
to say about it. I want...is for the Prime Minister of Canada. If
you want equal time. (Laughter.)

PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY : I don't insist on equal time, Mr.
President. (Laughter.) THE PRESIDENT: You're entitled...You've
got to have it.

Q -- any new commitments on *acid* *rain*?

PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY : I'll take it. (Laughter.) All right. We'll rotate.

Q How about bilateral accords?

PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY : We'll rotate, but I've got to get a chance to answer. *Acid* *rain*... to my National Science Advisor about that in the next few days.

Q Prime Minister Mulroney -- (Next question and answer in French.)

Q Mr. President --

Q Mr. Prime Minister -- THE PRESIDENT...hope, with the world watching, they would insist on free and fair elections.

PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY : Pardon me?

Q I want to ask you, are ...worried that that will hurt your health -- your wonderful health system in Canada?

PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY : Well, we're always -- we don't like to lose any talented Canadians. But we...Bush so we can get that same health system in the United States?

PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY : Well, Mr. Bush is very, very well-acquainted [sic] with the Canadian system and -- as...Was there any talk about that and will you be pushing for that?

PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY : Well, I think the President knows my position full-well. We know that there have...he forcefully brings it up and I tell him where we stand.

Q Prime Minister Mulroney, the President said you made concrete suggestions on the issue of short-range missiles. Can you give us an idea, sir, what some of those suggestions entailed?

PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY : Well, Mr. Clarke has been in touch with Secretary Baker and others in regard to...and I can't say.

Q Mr. Prime Minister, was there any discussion of a global warming convention, and if so, what direction did it take?

KWIC format, which prints only a portion of the record showing the search terms in context. The searcher can specify the number of words for the context. It is especially useful for lengthy records because it allows the searcher to determine the reason for the hit immediately and may eliminate the need to print the entire record.¹

Then he could:

- use proximity searching to look for phrases or words likely to occur reasonably close to each other to represent the subject. Never, never, just AND single terms together, without specifying boundaries smaller than the entire full-text.
- link with (N) to allow for variant word order
- if the database allows for subfields, as this one does, link the terms with (S). This means that the terms must appear in the same subfield and still does not specify word order. (S) in this file refers to the paragraph.
- truncate to pick up variants of the same root
- put in synonyms, near synonyms, other ways of spelling out the concept, such as people associated with an event.²

¹"New Full-Text Features in McGraw-Hill Business Backgrounder," *Dialog Chronolog*, 14 (November, 1986), 239-240.

²"Searching Full Text Bibliographic Databases." *Dialog Chronolog*, 12 (June, 1984), 136-138.

WASHINGTON POST ELECTRONIC EDITION

The next example is a record from the Washington Post Electronic Edition (Figure 6).¹ This is the electronic version of the morning daily and the Sunday Post. It is available the day after publication. The Post maintains its own extensive set of bureaus so the paper does not include UPI or AP stories. This would not be true of all full-text newspapers online. A recent CRS survey listed 113 full-texts newspaper databases available through Vu/Text, Nexis, Data Times-Datatek Corporation, and Dialog.² The Annapolis Capital, the Philadelphia Daily News, and the Philadelphia Inquirer are available through Vu/Text within 24 hours after publication. The Post is available through all systems.

Note:

- the article's headline in the paper is its title
- the story type is like the section tag in the newswire databases
- a broad type of news category.
- the actual newspaper section is given, but only by letter
- captions
- named person field

¹Washington Post Electronic Edition. 1983- . Washington: Washington Post Company, 1983- . (Dialog File 146)

²Bonnie Mangan and Kathy Gould. **List of Full Text Newspapers Online.** Washington, D. C.: Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, 1989. See also: Helen A. Gordon, comp. "Full-Text Newspapers Online," **Database 9** (August, 1986), 98-111.

Figure 6. EDITED EXAMPLE OF WASHINGTON POST ELECTRONIC EDITION
UNIT RECORD *

File 146:WASH. POST ELEC. ED. - APR 83 -05/04/89
(COPR. WASHINGTON POST 1989)
.....

1837148

Sex Bias Pervades Md. Courts, Panel Finds; Discrimination
Reported by Litigants, Judicial Candidates Alike.

The Washington Post, May 04, 1989, FINAL Edition

BY: Ed Bruske, Washington Post Staff Writer

SECTION: A SECTION, p. a01

STORY TYPE: News Maryland

LINE COUNT: 89 WORD COUNT: 976

A team of state-appointed legal authorities concluded yesterday that Maryland's courts are infected with pervasive discrimination against women, from setting alimony payments too low to mistreating female judicial candidates who are grilled on how they would care for their children while on the bench.

The report, resulting from a two-year study by a committee of judges and lawyers, gives few clues as to how many of the state's judges or legal practitioners are guilty of bias against women. But women's legal groups hailed the effort as a milestone in their attempts to reverse what they view as a longstanding handicap in court.

Circuit Judge Hilary D. Caplan of Baltimore, chairman of the committee, called sex bias "perhaps one of the most serious and pervasive problems in the courtroom today."

Based on testimony from 133 witnesses statewide as well as questionnaire responses from hundreds of judges and lawyers, the

...

MAJOR FINDINGS

Female victims of domestic violence are often mistreated by judges.

Child support and alimony are often set too low. Men's custody claims are resisted.

Female judicial nominees face hostility from male colleagues.

Women are subject to sometimes cavalier treatment, sexist comments and, sometimes, propositions from judges.

CAPTIONS: HILARY D. CAPLAN

NAMED PERSONS: CAPLAN, HILARY D.

DESCRIPTORS: Maryland; Sex discrimination; State courts;
Lawyers; Judges; Women

* ... denotes portion deleted for display purposes.

- organization name field
- descriptors
- the full text of the article
- word/line count

Here, limiting a search to the title field actually searches only the title field, but it is possible to search the lead paragraph, either alone or in combination.

USA TODAY DECISIONLINE

The final example is from USA Today Decisionline (Figure 7).¹ This file is also available online in a menu version as USAToday.² USA Today editors summarize certain stories during the night so that, when they are available the next morning, they are summaries of the major stories appearing in the newspaper. This search on Oliver North was done on May 5. Oliver North's conviction had been announced in the afternoon of May 4.

Note several things:

- more than one summary about a subject can appear on the same day
- summaries are usually only one paragraph long but may expand if they include quotes
- headline is title
- section heading is again type of news heading

¹USA Today Decisionline. Washington: Gannett News Media. (Dialog File 644)

²USAToday. Washington: Gannett News Media.

Figure 7. EXAMPLE OF USA TODAY DECISIONLINE SEARCH

File 644:USA TODAY DECISIONLINE - 05/05/89
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Set	Items	Description
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?ss	UD=890505	and (oliver or ollie) and north?
S1	183	UD=890505
S2	8	OLIVER
S3	1	OLLIE
S4	103	NORTH?
S5	4	UD="890505" AND (OLIVER OR OLLIE) AND NORTH?

?type 5/5/1-4

5/5/1
00056123
DECISIONLINE
Section Heading: Issues and Debate
Section Code: 09
USA TODAY Update May 5-7, 1989
Millicent Lawton, editor

TODAY'S DEBATE - OLIVER NORTH AND IRAN-CONTRA

USA TODAY'S OPINION:

To prosecutor John Keker, Oliver North was a cross between Adolf Hitler and Joe Isuzu. To defense attorney Brendan Sullivan, he was a loyal and dedicated Marine. A jury decided Thursday that he was a bit of each. That's justice.

OTHER VIEWS:

JESSE HILL FORD, novelist and screen writer: The man who would have freed the hostages has been taken hostage, pilloried by the country he served so steadfastly. And in this foul process our jury system has been prostituted, judicial honor defiled, and the will of the people denied. But Oliver North's leadership qualities ensure he will rise above this mess and serve his country again.

GEORGE THOMPSON, a former U.S. foreign service officer: The jurors had a terrible, thankless task. They undoubtedly knew they had been asked to convict Ollie as nothing more than a self-styled pawn in a game of chess. Exit the jurors, knowing the real criminals are still out there. If only we could try them all.

QUOTELINES ON NORTH AND IRAN-CONTRA:

BRENDAN SULLIVAN, North's attorney, to jury: "What's the difference between what Ollie North did and the president did? The president is happily retired in California. Oliver North has spent 2 1/2 years in a Washington courtroom fighting for his reputation."

JOHN KEKER, North's prosecutor, to jury: "Don't be misled by the emotional content of this 'fall guy' term...The fall guy is guilty. The winner is guilty. The people who pay him are guilty. They are all guilty."

VOICES FROM ACROSS THE NATION ON NORTH AND IRAN-CONTRA:

WALNUT CREEK, CALIF., John Claibourne, 44, television engineer: I'm not so sure that Oliver North should have gone to trial because I think they tried the wrong guy. He was the fall guy. Others are guilty, but we'll never be able to touch them.

MIDDLETOWN, N.Y., Barbara Kline, 54, homemaker: Oliver North should have been punished. It's one thing to be a military man and another to be a demagogue.

5/5/2

00056033

DECISIONLINE

Section Heading: USA News

Section Code: 01

USA TODAY Update May 5-7, 1989

Diana Mitsu Klos, editor

NORTH - I WON'T GIVE UP

Retired Marine Lt. Col. Oliver North declared Thursday that he hasn't surrendered after a jury convicted him on three of 12 counts in the Iran-Contra scandal. "As a Marine I was taught to fight and fight hard for as long as it takes to prevail," North said at a news conference, his wife Betsy at his side. "We will be fully vindicated."

5/5/3

00056032

DECISIONLINE

Section Heading: USA News

Section Code: 01

USA TODAY Update May 5-7, 1989

Diana Mitsu Klos, editor

POLL - PARDON NORTH

President Bush should pardon convicted Iran-Contra scandal figure Oliver North, say a majority polled by USA TODAY Thursday. Findings: 72 percent say North was a Reagan administration "fall guy"; 33 percent say North is a hero; 54 percent agree North was a "willing participant"; 48 percent say

North should spend no time in prison. (From the USA TODAY News section.)

5/5/4

00056031

DECISIONLINE

Section Heading: USA News

Section Code: 01

USA TODAY Update May 5-7, 1989

Diana Mitsu Klos, editor

NORTH CONVICTED ON 3 COUNTS

Oliver North was convicted Thursday on three of 12 charges in the Iran-Contra trial: obstructing Congress by falsifying a list of events in 1986; taking National Security Council documents; taking an illegal gift - a \$13,800 home security system, purchased with money from funds diverted from arms sales to Iran. The maximum penalty for all counts is ten years in jail and \$750,000 in fines.

SUMMARY

As you can see, these databases cover similar kinds of content --current, newsworthy events -- but they vary significantly in specific content, arrangement, and search access points. They are searched most effectively if the searcher is familiar with the nature of the material they cover, the structure of the database, and the accessible search points. They are useful in libraries because they update printed materials. The full-text databases are especially useful because there is word access to the entire record and even parts of documents are traceable.

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